Claims

1.   A vertically integrated method for facilitating the processing of transactions for entities, comprising:

receiving a request for a transaction from an entity;

determining software programs, among a plurality of software programs providing processing for different services, for processing the transaction;

accessing the software programs to process the transaction;

receiving results of the processing; and

providing the results to the entity.

2.   The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving step includes receiving the request via a network.

3.   The method of claim 1 wherein the accessing step includes accessing a solution stack having a plurality of software programs providing services to process the transaction.

4.   The method of claim 1 wherein the accessing step includes using an integration block to access the software programs and maintain the software programs decoupled.

5.   The method of claim 1 wherein the accessing step includes using the software programs providing the following services: credit card processing, calculation of taxes, warehouse management, shipping, and invoicing.

6.   The method of claim 1, further including providing to the entities a single access point for processing of transactions using the software programs.

7.   An apparatus for providing a vertically integrated solution for processing transactions for entities, comprising:

a module configured to receive a request for a transaction from an entity;

a module configured to determine software programs, among a plurality of software programs providing processing for different services, for processing the transaction;

a module configured to access the software programs to process the transaction and to receive results of the processing; and

a module configured to provide the results to the entity.

8.   A method for providing a single source for facilitating the processing of transactions for business entities using a plurality of software programs, comprising:

providing to the entities a single communication point;

receiving via the single communication point requests for transactions from the entities;

calling a plurality of software programs in a solution stack to process the transactions;

receiving results of the processing; and

returning to the entities via the single communication point the results of the processing.

9.   The method of claim 8, further comprising decoupling the plurality of software programs using an integration block.

10.   The method of claim 8 wherein the calling step includes using the plurality of software programs providing the following services: credit card processing, calculation of taxes, warehouse management, shipping, and invoicing.

11.   The method of claim 8 wherein the receiving step includes receiving the requests via a network.

12.   The method of claim 11 wherein the returning step includes sending the results of the processing to the entities via the network.

13.   The method of claim 8 wherein the calling step includes using software plug-ins to access the plurality of software programs.

14.   The method of claim 8 wherein the calling step includes using one of the plurality of software programs that calls the others of the plurality of software programs for processing the transactions.